

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A football glove for preventing hyperextension of fingers, said football glove comprising:

a hand covering portion for covering a palm and back of a user's hand;

a plurality of form fitting finger receiving receptacles extending from said hand covering portion, and in communication with said hand covering portion, each of said finger receiving receptacles includes a front and a back for receiving therebetween a finger of the user's hand covered by said hand covering portion;

a unidirectional stiffener having an upper interlocking ladder section having a first set of flexible sidebars, and a lower interlocking ladder section having a second set of flexible sidebars, fixed relative to at least one of said finger receiving receptacles adjacent said back of said at least one finger receiving receptacle extends toward said hand covering portion, wherein said unidirectional stiffener is bendable toward said front of said at least one finger receiving receptacle to allow the user's finger to naturally curl toward the user's palm and is substantially rigid in an opposing direction to prevent hyperextension of the user's finger.

2. (Original) The football glove of claim 1, in which a thumb receiving receptacle extends from said hand covering portion, and is communication with said hand covering portion for receiving the user's thumb.

3. (Original) The football glove of claim 1, in which said hand covering portion includes a palm covering including a tacky material facing away from the user's palm received in the hand covering portion.

4. (Original) The football glove of claim 1, in which a wrist support extends from said hand covering portion which can wrap around the user's wrist extending from the user's hand received in said hand covering portion.

5. (Original) The football glove of claim 1, in which a liner joined to hand covering portion and said one of said finger receiving receptacle separates said stiffener from the user's hand.

6. (Original) The football glove of claim 1, in which said stiffener includes upper and lower interlocking ladder structures.

7. (Original) The football glove of claim 2, in which a unidirectional stiffener extends into the receptacle receiving the user's thumb.

8. (Original) The football glove of claim 1 including padding fixed to at least one of said finger receiving receptacles proximal a location covering a finger joint of the user.

9. (Original) The football glove of claim 1, in which a pad engages an end of said stiffener to cushion a force exerted on the user's hand by said stiffener.

10. (Currently Amended) A method of using a football glove, said method comprising: slipping a football player's hand into a football glove having receptacles for receiving fingers and a thumb of the football player's hand, wherein a unidirectional stiffener having an upper interlocking ladder section having a first set of flexible sidebars, and a lower interlocking ladder section having a second set of flexible sidebars, stiffens at least one of said receptacles when said receptacles are bent in a particular direction; and

blocking an opposing player with the hand wearing the football glove, wherein the hand is open, and the unidirectional stiffener resists efforts by the opposing player to push the finger received in the at least one receptacle backwards toward a hyperextended position to prevent hyperextension of the football player's fingers received in the receptacles.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, including grasping an object with the hand wearing the football glove by natural bending the fingers and thumb received in the receptacles, wherein the unidirectional stiffener curls in the direction of the bending finger received in said at least one receptacle.

12. (Original) The method as in claim 10, in which said football glove includes a hand covering portion, and said receptacles extend from said hand covering portion, and are in communication with said hand covering portion.

13. (Original) The method as in claim 12, in which in which the receptacle receiving the football player's thumb extends from said hand covering portion, and is communication with said hand covering portion for receiving the user's thumb.

14. (Original) The method as in claim 12, in which a wrist support extends from said hand covering portion which can wrap around the football player's wrist extending from the football player's hand received in said hand covering portion.

15. (Original) The method as in claim 12, in which a liner is joined to said hand covering portion and said at least one receptacle to separate said stiffener from the football player's hand.

16. (Original) The method as in claim 10, in which said stiffener includes upper and lower interlocking ladder structures.

17. (Original) The method as in claim 10, in which said receptacles receiving the football player's fingers are form fitting to fix the stiffener relative to the football player's finger receiving in said at least one receptacle.

18. (Original) The method as in claim 10, in which a unidirectional stiffener extends into the receptacle receiving the user's thumb.

19. (Original) The method as in claim 10 including padding fixed to at least one of said receptacles proximal a location covering a finger joint of the user.

20. (Original) The method as in claim 10, in which a pad engages an end of said stiffener to cushion a force exerted on the user's hand by said stiffener.